

ORDINANCE NO.

FILE OF CITY COUNCIL

BILL NO. 44 - 2026

MAY 20, 2026

AN ORDINANCE

Amending Part I Administrative Legislation, Chapter 12 Authorities, Boards and Commissions, Article XV Council of Youth by updating its purpose and practices.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ALLENTOWN:

SECTION ONE: That Article XV Council of Youth be repealed in its entirety and adopting the article below:

Chapter 12. Authorities, Boards and Commissions

Article XV. Council of Youth

§ 12-79. Purpose.

The purpose of the Council of Youth is to advise the Mayor and City Council on matters related to youth issues and priorities. The Council will promote youth-centered policies and initiatives by making recommendations to the Administration, City departments, and City Council regarding legislation, programs, and strategies that impact young people.

The Council exists to foster strong, collaborative relationships among youth, families, schools, and the broader community to help ensure a safe, nurturing, and enriching environment where young people can thrive. Additionally, the Council is committed to strengthening civic engagement among youth and cultivating the next generation of leaders in Allentown. Through voice, representation, and shared responsibility, the Council empowers young people to actively shape the future of their city.

§ 12-80. Establishment and composition.

A. The Council of Youth shall consist of thirteen (13) voting members appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by City Council. At least nine (9) members shall be youth who reside in the City and are between the ages of 14 and 21 at the time of appointment. Youth members shall constitute most of the Council. Up to four (4) members may be adults who reside or work in the City and have demonstrated experience in youth development, education, workforce development, public safety, or community engagement. Adult members shall serve in mentorship and advisory capacity and shall not outnumber youth members. One (1) representative of the School District and one (1) representative of the Department of Police may each serve as non-voting liaison members.

Members of the public, community organizations, and City officials may submit recommendations for appointment to the Mayor. The Mayor shall designate appropriate staff to provide administrative support to the Council.

B. Youth members shall serve one (1) year terms and may be reappointed for up to two (2) additional consecutive terms, provided they continue to meet eligibility requirements. Adult members shall serve staggered two (2) year terms and may be reappointed for one (1) additional consecutive term. To ensure continuity, initial adult appointments shall be structured so that approximately one-half of adult member terms expire each year. Youth members shall remain eligible to serve until reaching twenty-one (21) years of age.

C. Attendance, Removal and Vacancies

Attendance. Members are expected to attend and actively participate in all regular meetings of the Council. Any voting member who is absent from three (3) consecutive regular meetings, or more than half of the scheduled meetings within a twelve-month period, without good cause, may be subject to review.

Removal. A member may be removed by the Mayor for misconduct, failure to fulfill duties, violation of Council policies, or continued nonattendance, subject to notice and an opportunity to respond.

Vacancies. A vacancy occurring prior to the expiration of a term shall be filled by appointment of the Mayor, subject to confirmation by City Council, for the remainder of the unexpired term. The Council may submit recommendations to the Mayor to fill any vacancy

D. The Council shall meet once per month and may convene additional meetings as necessary, as determined by the Council. All meetings shall be open to the public.

E. The Council members and City staff shall have the appropriate clearances needed for dealing with youth.

F. The Council shall develop and approve their by-laws.

§ 12-81. Powers and duties.

A. The Council shall provide a written report and present recommendations to the Mayor and City Council on a tri-annual basis regarding the status of youth matters in the City and the activities of the Council.

B. The Council shall provide recommendations and advice to the Mayor, City Council, and City departments on policies, projects, programs, and other matters affecting youth. This includes, but is not limited to, areas such as youth safety, education, workforce development, recreational and cultural opportunities, civic engagement, and overall well-being. The Council may also propose initiatives, strategies, and partnerships to enhance the quality of life for young people throughout the City.

C. The Council shall serve as a feedback loop for the City's Violence Prevention Plan, providing input, recommendations, and youth perspectives on strategies, programs, and initiatives to reduce violence and promote safety throughout the community

D. Organize and participate in community forums, town halls, or public events to hear youth concerns and ideas.

E. Provide a representation or a "voice" for youth in the community.

§ 12-82. Annual report and presentation.

The Council shall prepare written reports on its activities, plans, and recommendations three times per year approximately in **March, July, and November**. Each report shall include updates on the Council's current activities, a one-year plan, and long-term goals. Reports shall be submitted to the Mayor and presented to City Council at an appropriate committee meeting.

SECTION TWO: That this Ordinance will take effect ten (10) days after final passage.

SECTION THREE: That all Ordinances inconsistent with the above provisions are repealed to the extent of their inconsistency.

Legislative Template

- What department or bureau is this bill originating from?

CED – Health Bureau and City Administration

- Summary and facts of the bill.

This bill seeks to update the purpose, composition, powers and duties of the Council of Youth in order to create a youth-led group of individuals with clear goals and objectives. This is a part of the City's efforts to invest in young people – a key staple to our developing Violence Prevention Plan.

- Purpose – Please include the following in your explanation:
 - a. What are the specific goals or tasks the bill seeks to accomplish?

The main goal is to establish a new ordinance that is centered around strengthening civic engagement among youth, cultivating the next generation of leaders in Allentown, and empowering young people to actively shape the future of their city.

- b. What are the benefits of doing this?

This new ordinance will create a strong foundation for both residents and the Administration to work together on youth-related goals and initiatives.

- Financial Impact – Please include the following in your explanation:
 - a. Cost (initial and ongoing)

There is no cost to the City.

- Priority status – Are there any deadlines to be aware of?

None.